

ON TRACES  
OF AN  
INDEFINITE ARTICLE  
IN ASSYRIAN

BY

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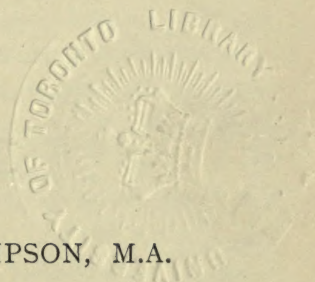




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## PREFACE.

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DURING the course of my reading and copying of certain Babylonian and Assyrian cuneiform texts preserved in the British Museum, I have noted from time to time a considerable number of passages in which the case-endings of the noun have been dropped, notwithstanding the fact that the noun is obviously not in the construct state. This phenomenon was noticed by Dr. Flemming, who in his pamphlet "Die grosse Steinplatteninschrift Nebukadnezar's II.," 1883, p. 32, regarded it as the use of the form of the construct state instead of the absolute state. Jensen, Latrille, and Delitzsch have in turn made certain observations on the matter, but their explanations can hardly be regarded either as satisfactory or final; similarly MM. Scheil and Fossey, in a work published in 1901, also call attention to the use in Assyrian of a certain number of words without their case-endings, and, while admitting that the nouns under consideration are not in the construct state, adduce no satisfactory evidence that their proposed solution of the difficulty is correct.

In the following pages will be found between thirty and forty extracts from passages in the cuneiform texts, and written both in Babylonian and Assyrian, in which this phenomenon occurs. I have verified every extract

with the original documents, where such are preserved in the British Museum, and, printed in the cuneiform type, I now submit them to the consideration of Assyriologists and Semitic scholars in general. Personally, I believe that these extracts prove the existence of traces of an absolute state in Assyrian, similar to that in use in Aramaic, and if this be so, these passages merit the earnest attention of all those who are interested in accurate translation of the cuneiform inscriptions. If the verdict of competent Assyriologists be in favour of the view which is here suggested for their discussion, it will follow as a matter of course that when a noun is employed in Babylonian and Assyrian with case-endings, it possesses the force of the emphatic state in Aramaic, even though it has apparently no equivalent for the postpositive article in the dialects of the latter. As Syriac is one of the best known of the Aramaic dialects, I have divided the series of examples from which I am attempting to prove this nominal use in Assyrian into groups, which I have arranged under the various rules for the use of the absolute in Syriac, as found in the excellent *Traité de Grammaire Syriaque* (Paris, 1881), of M. Duval, and to avoid all possibility of misunderstanding these rules are quoted *verbatim*.

My thanks are due to Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge for his valuable suggestions during the course of the work.

R. CAMPBELL THOMPSON.



## ON TRACES OF AN INDEFINITE ARTICLE IN ASSYRIAN

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DURING the period when the decipherers of the cuneiform inscriptions were building up the grammar step by step there was much controversy as to the existence of a definite article in Assyrian. First, Sir Henry Rawlinson<sup>1</sup> thought he had found an article in Babylonian, but his suggestion was based on an insecure foundation, and he appears, from his footnote, to have confused certain nouns (used in conjunction with prepositions to form a compound expression) with a possible article, and it is probable that he himself rejected his hypothesis at a later period of his life. Dr. Oppert,<sup>2</sup> who was really the first to publish a connected Assyrian grammar, maintained that the term "emphatic,"<sup>3</sup> instead of "absolute," was the more correct name for certain nominal forms, with how much

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, xii., p. 410.

<sup>2</sup> *Grammaire Assyrienne*, 1859; 2nd edition, 1868.

<sup>3</sup> ". . . Ces désinences étaient um pour le nominatif et am et im pour les cas obliques. Nous appelons ce fait la mimmatum. C'est d'elle qu'est dérivé ce que nous nommons l'état emphatique" (1868, p. 13).

reason we shall see later. Ménant,<sup>1</sup> following Oppert, considered that Assyrian followed Aramaic in the use of the emphatic state,<sup>2</sup> and thereby replaced the article.<sup>3</sup> The view formulated by Dr. Oppert was in 1864 combated by Dr. Olshausen,<sup>4</sup> and the matter was again referred to in 1872 by Prof. A. H. Sayce, who summarizes the state of the case and adds his own conclusion as follows:—

“Before going further, it will be necessary to controvert Dr. Oppert’s extremely misleading ascription of an ‘emphatic state’ to the Assyrian noun. Olshausen has already objected that ‘the value of

<sup>1</sup> *Exposé des Eléments de la Grammaire Assyrienne*, Paris, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> “Tel est le complément de la théorie de M. Oppert sur l’état emphatique et la mimation; il en résulte que les langues sémitiques présentent deux manières de faire comprendre que le substantif est pris dans un sens déterminé: cet état est indiqué, en hébreu, par l’article, en araméen, par l’état emphatique; l’assyrien a suivi, dans ce cas, les formes araméennes” (p. 59).

<sup>3</sup> “L’article n’existe pas; mais nous retrouvons, en assyrien comme en chaldéen et en syriaque, l’emploi de l’état emphatique pour remplacer l’article avec toutes les nuances que cette expression comporte” (p. 291).

<sup>4</sup> Olshausen, *Abh. d. Königl. Akad. der Wissenschaften*, Berlin, 1864, p. 486: “Der Werth der Nasalirung des Casusvocalis im Arabischen und des *status emphaticus* im Aramäischen ist nicht bloss ein ganz verschiedener, sondern gradezu ein entgegengesetzter: der Araber nasalirt die Endung des indeterminirten Wortes, der *status emphaticus* bezeichnet das determinirte Wort. Die Nasalirung haftet wesentlich an der Casusendung, der *status emphaticus* wird erst durch deren Abstreifung möglich. Wenn es an sich denkbar ist, dass aus einer Endung *ā* im Aramäischen die Endung *ā* geworden wäre, ist es doch im höchsten Grade unwahrscheinlich, ja unmöglich, dass auch aus *ā* und *ī* *ā* werde.”

“ ‘the nasalisation of the case-vowel in Arabic, and  
“ ‘of the *status emphaticus* in Aramaic, is not only  
“ ‘altogether different, but totally opposed: the Arab  
“ ‘nasalises the termination of the indeterminate word,  
“ ‘the *status emphaticus* marks the determined word.  
“ ‘The nasalisation is really part of the case-ending ;  
“ ‘the *status emphaticus* is first made possible through  
“ ‘the loss of the latter. While it is conceivable that  
“ ‘in Aramaic the termination  $\bar{a}$  arose from the termina-  
“ ‘tion  $\check{a}$ , it is in the highest degree improbable, nay  
“ ‘impossible, that that  $\bar{a}$  could arise from  $\bar{u}$  and  $\bar{i}$ .’  
“ The last sentence refers to Oppert’s transliteration of  
“ all the case endings by  $\aleph$  ; a procedure which throws  
“ Semitic philology into the greatest confusion, assumes  
“ the original identity of the case-terminations, which  
“ is philologically impossible, and in spite of Arabic  
“ derives them from the post-fixed article of the  
“ Aramaic. Oppert replies that as the Assyrian has no  
“ article, it cannot be compared with Arabic: its case-  
“ endings correspond to the Arabic nouns without  
“ *tanwîn* preceded by the article, and to the Aramaic  
“ emphatic state. But the emphatic state in Aramaic is  
“ most probably a post-fixed article, consequently it  
“ can be compared with the Assyrian even less than  
“ Arabic. Moreover, under any circumstances, the  
“ Aramaic emphatic state has a different philological  
“ origin from the Assyrian case-endings, which can be  
“ compared only with the similar terminations in  
“ Arabic. Besides, the case-endings are used in

“Assyrian in cases where the article, as a general rule, would not be allowed (as with predicates).<sup>1</sup> Dr. Oppert seems to separate the mimmation and the case vowels: this cannot be done: the mimmation is but the older and more correct form belonging equally to verbs and nouns, which a later stage of the language began to drop, though it was generally retained before the conjunction *va*. Dr. Oppert’s view reduces itself to this: either the ‘emphatic state’ in Assyrian means a post-fixed article, which is untrue, or it means that special emphasis was to be laid upon the words which have the case-endings—always<sup>2</sup> added unless the noun is in the construct state—which is equally untrue.”<sup>3</sup>

The question of the emphatic state was then allowed to drop, and since then the term *absolute* instead of *emphatic* has been applied by grammarians to the noun with case-endings.

We may now turn to the debated question of certain cases in Assyrian where the noun, although it is obviously not in the construct state, has lost all trace of case-endings. For this phenomenon many theories have been formulated. Flemming<sup>4</sup> calls these cases a use “der Status-konstruktus-Form für den

<sup>1</sup> But see p. 13 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Later researches proved that this was not the case: see p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Sayce, *Assyrian Grammar* (Trübner), London, 1872, p. 102. See also Schrader, *Die Assyrisch-babylonischen Keilinschriften*, 1872, p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> *Die grosse Steinplatteninschrift Nebukadnezar’s II.*, 1883, p. 32.



“Status absolutus.” Jensen<sup>1</sup> considers that the Assyrians, as their language degenerated, began to omit certain noun-endings and that the language was gradually reaching a level similar to that to which Arabic has come.

Latrille<sup>2</sup> claims that in most cases these forms are

<sup>1</sup> *Zeits. für Keilschr.*, 1884, p. 297: “*Arrat*. Omissio earum, quae casus significant vocalium saepius animadverti potest. Ut *zikru u ziniš* (5, 2, 40a), *sihir rabi* (4, 19, 12a), *tâmti šaplit* (5, 1, 19a), *šadi u tiâmât* (Sargon Silberinschrift 25), *kibrat irbîti* (1, 32, 34), *išîn šir* (2, 62, 64h), *murūš kaḳḳad* (4, 34, 3b), dicerent Assyro-Babylonii, eo effectum esse videtur, quod binarum vocum inter se conjunctarum alteram altera decurtare solet. Sed ex eo, quod 5, 32, 66 scribitur *himmat*, 2, 23, 55c *mâl*, 5, 18, 23 *nîr*, pro *mâmîtu* saepissime *mâmît*, pro *arratu* saepissime *arrat* (cum plerumque vocalis finalis in scribendo non omittatur), praesertim cum pro *itîli* (*itîla*) scribatur *itîl* (5, 25, 45), pro *îli il* (Sanh. Bellino 55), concludere licet, posterioribus temporibus exitus substantivorum ab Ass.-Babyloniis negligi coeptos esse linguamque eorum ad eum statum adductum, ad quem nunc antiqua venit Arabum lingua. Dubium esse non potest, quin multo sapius vocalis finalis abjecta sit quam scriptura indicaverunt Assyrii, quam, quia semper lingua enuntiata linguae scriptae antecedit, plurimas linguae mutationes celare constat.”

<sup>2</sup> *Zeits. für Keilschr.*, 1885, p. 233: “In den meisten Fällen sind auch diese Wörter mit abgeworfenem Endvokal formell mit der Status-konstruktus-Form identisch—aber doch nicht in allen. Die Form *ûm* z. B., welche sich etliche Male für den Plural *ûmê* findet, ist nicht der Stat. konstr. des Plural von *ûmu*. Mit dem von Flemming angeführten *nisiḳ* und *šar* für *niskû* und *šarru* hat es nach meiner Ansicht eine eigene Bewandtnis (vgl. den Kommentar zu II. 1, und II. 49). Wenn freilich bei einer segolatform wie *niskû* der Endvokal abfiel, so musste sie zu *nisiḳ* werden. Diese Abschleifung des Endvokals ist im Assyrisch-Babylonischen ziemlich häufig, gehört jedoch dort zu den Ausnahmen während umgekehrt im Hebräischen die Formen mit Endvokal seltene Ausnahmen sind.”



the same as the construct state, but the *ûm*, though sometimes found as the plural *ûmê*, is not the construct of the plural of *ûmu*. Delitzsch<sup>1</sup> notes several cases which have dropped the case-endings:—

“Apart from the names of the gods, which, in many cases, have not developed case distinctions (cf. *Šamaš*, *Sin*, *Marduk*, *Ištâr*), and names of persons, the nominal parts of which very often dispense with the case-endings (cf. *Adar-malik*, *Šamaš-šum-ukîn*, *Ašur-ah-iddina*), the Assyrian noun, when not standing in the construct state, appears but rarely without a final vowel: cf. *murruš kak-kad* (IV. R 3, 43b), *ku-dur u-kin-nu* ‘the boundary they fixed’ (II. R 65 rev. col. iii. 21), *mâla šû-um nabû* (IV. R 26, 59a), *unammer kîma û-um* (V. R 34, col. i. 52), *simma lâ âš* (for *la âšâ*) ‘unyielding blindness’ (III. R 43, col. iv. 17).” Compare also §122 (2). “In respect of state, Subst. and adj. stand in the absol. state; constructions like the following are less common: *ašur rûke* ‘a distant place’ (IV. R 14, No. 1, 2), *iššur mu-bar-šu* ‘a feathered bird’ (Shams. ii. 49), *lišîn limuttu*<sup>2</sup> ‘an evil tongue’ (K. 246 col. i. 32). *Marduk mar* (sign §9, No. 157), *rêštû ša apsi* (IV. R 22, 30b). For these the student is referred to ‘the beginning of §66.’

Scheil and Fossey, in their grammar<sup>3</sup> also note the

<sup>1</sup> *Assyrian Grammar*, 1889, § 66.

<sup>2</sup> See Bezold, *Zeits. für Keilschr.*, ii., p. 316.

<sup>3</sup> *Grammaire Assyrienne*, p. 10.

fact that "la désinence casuelle disparaît dans un certain nombre de cas où il est manifestement impossible de supposer un état construit," and give a list of fifteen such occurrences. Their explanation is similar to Jensen's: "il semble que dans ces locutions, d'un emploi fréquent, la désinence soit tombée, par suite d'une espèce d'usure, née de la tendance à la brièveté qui caractérise le langage parlé." They separate one distinct use of this loss of the final vowel—"cette apocope de la voyelle finale est encore fréquent dans les locutions formées d'un verbe et d'un régime de même racine," giving four examples.

From the above quotations from works on Assyrian grammar it will be seen that the occurrence of a noun without case-endings and yet not in the construct state is well recognized, and for which various reasons have been suggested.

From the cases which I have noted and which are here appended, it seems to me that some fundamental grammatical idea underlies all of them, although it may apparently not always be adhered to. This idea appears to indicate a certain *indefiniteness*, and would therefore seem to bring such cases into a category similar to that of Syriac nouns in the absolute state. If such a case as *ultu riš adi kit*,<sup>1</sup> "from beginning to end," be taken, it is obvious that neither *riš* nor *kit* can be in the construct state, and yet both have lost

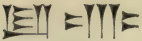



<sup>1</sup> See (2) (a), p. 16.


their case-endings. Both *riš* and *kit* (in their simplest form) would well coincide with the idea demanded by the Syriac absolute, and if this be so, then in spite of the arguments against the theory that the forms with the case-endings should be named "emphatic," it would seem that such forms as *kitu* and *rišu* (with the case-endings), contain at least the idea of a definite article, and little objection can be raised to this if the late Dr. Wright's theory of the case terminations be admitted.<sup>1</sup> On this assumption, the Assyrian noun when used with its case-endings will be the equivalent (in sense and meaning, although not etymologically) of the Aramaic emphatic, and the Assyrian forms without case-endings (other than the construct) will similarly correspond to the absolute.





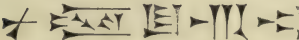
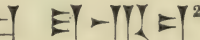
The following is a series of extracts from passages in the cuneiform inscriptions, which illustrate the use of nouns, &c., not in the construct state, and yet which are used without case-terminations. The rules at the head of each section are those for the Syriac absolute from Duval's *Grammaire Syriaque*, p. 335 ff.

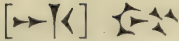

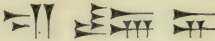


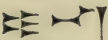
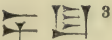
(1) "*Il est de règle pour les adjectifs et participes attributifs . . . Cependant, si l'adjectif ou le participe, bien qu'attribut, est pris substantivement, il a l'état emphatique.*"

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wright (*Comparative Grammar*, 1890, p. 143) considered it to be tolerably certain that the accusative termination *-a* was a pronominal element of a demonstrative nature, and nothing but the demonstrative *hâ*. The nominative *-u* he thought might possibly be the pronominal element *hû*.

- (a)   (var. )   
*lu - u* *ha - ' (var. me) - ir*  
 Mayst thou be

<sup>1</sup>  
*at - ta*  
 husband.

- (b)      
*kima ti - nu - ri la - bi - ri ana*  
 Like an old oven for
-  <sup>2</sup>  
*nu - uk - ku - ri - ka ma - ri - is*  
 thine annoyance (is) a sick man











- (c)     
*[Ti] - amat ša si - in - ni -*  
 Tiamat who is a woman
-    
*ša - at ia - ar - ka*  
 attacketh thee
-  <sup>3</sup>  
*i - na kak - ku*  
 with the sword.

Cf. also *ilu Dil-but sin-ni-ša-at*, "Venus (is) female"  
 (W. A. I., III, 53, 30b).











<sup>1</sup> W. A. I., IV, 41, I, 7.










<sup>2</sup> W. A. I., II, 16, IV, 10 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Duplicate of No. 38396 (King, *Cun. Texts*, xiii., pl. 4).

(d)       
*ilu Iṣ - tar - ma* *ṣi - rat*  
 Ishtar is supreme,  
    <sup>1</sup>  
*ilu Iṣ - tar - ma* *ṣar - rat*  
 Ishtar is queen.

Compare also

      
*kima* *ilu A - nim* *abi - ka*  
 Like Anu, thy father,  
    <sup>2</sup>  
*ki - bit - ka* *ṣi - rat*  
 thy command is supreme.

(e)        
 VI. *riksī - šī - na* *sibit (bit)*  
 Six are their bands, seven  
  <sup>3</sup>  
*ru - u - a*  
 the companions.

In case (a) *ha'ir* or *hamir* is obviously not in the construct state, but is a noun of participial form used

<sup>1</sup> King, *Semitic Text and Translation Series*, vol. xi.

<sup>2</sup> King, *Babylonian Magic*, No. 60, obv. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Tallquist, *Maqlu*, iv., 8J.



as a predicate with an indefinite sense. On the other hand, compare *at-ta lu-u aš-ša-tu ana-ku lu-u mu-ut-ka*, "Mayst thou be my wife, may I be thy husband" (a marriage formula?) (B.M. 42338); here, however, *aššatu* is the translation of DAM.MU. In case (b) *mařiš* is a translation of AL.GIG, and might be taken to be a permansive. But *marâšu* has already the form *maruș* as its permansive, and it would be difficult to translate it as though it were a verb here. If on the other hand *mařiš* is taken to be the simple form of the participial *maršu*, "sick," here used as a predicate in an indefinite way, the translation is simple. In case (c) King (*Cun. Texts*, xiii., pl. 4, r. 14) gives the variant *si-in-ni-ša-tum*, and doubtless both forms here are equally admissible; case (d) well illustrates the difficulty of deciding whether the feminine predicates are permansives of verbs, or nouns in the simplest form. Here however (notwithstanding the fact that *širat* occurs as the 2nd pers. of the permansive in W. A. I., IV, 9, 54), *šarrat* might be a noun, though on the analogy of the well-known case of *šar-ra-ku*, "I am king" (W. A. I., I, 17, 32), it might equally well be a verb. In case (e) *sibit* is used as a predicate; cf. (?) *si-bit ilâni<sup>pl</sup> šame(e) rap-šu-ti*, *si-bit ilâni<sup>pl</sup> ma-a ti ra-pa-aš-ti*, &c. (W. A. I., IV, 1,\* iii. 14, 16), "seven (are) the gods of the broad heaven, seven are the gods of the broad earth."

On the other hand we meet *hi-tu<sup>1</sup> ia-a-nu*, "there is no mistake."

<sup>1</sup> Late Babylonian letter, B.M. No. 29,470, rev. 21-22.

(2) “*Dans les substantifs, l'état absolu est encore fréquent dans les cas nécessairement indéterminés, où l'état emphatique avait peu de prise.*”

Under this head may be classed —

(a)	𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵	𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵	𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵	𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵
	<i>ul - tu</i>	<i>ri - eš</i>	<i>a - di</i>	
	From	beginning	to	

𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵<sup>1</sup>  
*ki - it.*  
 end.

Compare such a phrase as 𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵 𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵  
 𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵 𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵<sup>2</sup> *ul-tu ši-tan a-di šil-la-an.*<sup>3</sup>  
 Here, however, *šitan* and *šillan* are the only forms found.

(b)	𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵	𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵	(v. 𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵)
	<i>niše pl</i>	<i>zik - ru</i>	(v. <i>zi - kir</i> )
	People,	male	







𐎠𐎥𐎵𐎫𐎠𐎥𐎵<sup>4</sup>  
*u sin - niš*  
 and female.




<sup>1</sup> Babylonian letter, B.M. No. 49934, r. 5.

<sup>2</sup> W. A. I., I, 7, F, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Delitzsch, *Grammar*, § 80.







<sup>4</sup> G. Smith, *History of Asurb.*, p. 200, 9.

- (c)        
*ši - hir* *ra - bi* *ma - la*  
 Small (and) great, all there

   <sup>1</sup>

*ba - šu - u*

were.








- (d)        
*li - ša - nu* *limuttim (tim)* *ina*


May an evil tongue

     <sup>2</sup>

*a-hat* *li - iz - ziz*

stand away (from him).

- (e)         
*ina* XII. *kas - bu* *kaḫ-kaḫ* *ina*  
 In twelve *kasbu* of ground in

   <sup>3</sup>

*mē<sup>p</sup>z*

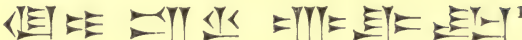
the water . . .

<sup>1</sup> W. A. I., V, 56, 29.

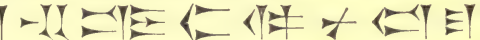
<sup>2</sup> B.M. No. 36331, r. 5.

<sup>3</sup> W. A. I., I, 46, III, 54.

(f) *išten* *passim* : *e.g.*

  
*ki - i*                      *iš - tin*                      *u - pah - hir*<sup>1</sup>

Together (*lit.* like one) I gathered.

In case (a) the forms *ri-eš* and *ki-it* are very noticeable : in case (d), it is perhaps unsafe to base any theories on a "practice" tablet, especially when the more common form is *ina ahîti* (W. A. I., IV, 15\*, a, 22, &c.). But in cases (a), (b), (c) and (e), I think the indefiniteness is fairly obvious ; while, in case (f), *išten* frequently has little more force than the indefinite article ; *e.g.* <sup>2</sup> *isten(=) imer lid-di-nu-nim-ma*, "Let them give me an ass and . . ."

(3) "Un nom répété dans un sens distributif est généralement à l'état absolu."

The following case proves nothing :

        
 VII.    *u*                      VII.    *karpāt*                      *a - da - gur*  
 Seven and seven                      vessels


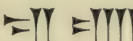

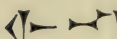

<sup>3</sup>  
*uk-tin*  
 I placed.

<sup>1</sup> Winckler, *Keil chr. Sargons*, Pl. 34 (page 120) l. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Rm. 116, rev. 7.


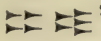


<sup>3</sup> W. A. I., IV, 43 [50], III, 44 [47].


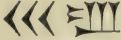
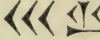
(4) "De même, après un nom de nombre."

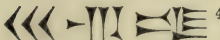
(a)			
	<i>ki - ṣir</i>	<i>si - bit</i>	<i>a - di</i>
	Knots	seven	twice
			
	<i>ṣi - na</i>	<i>ku - ṣur - ma</i>	
		bind.	

Or should this come under the heading of (9) (d)?

(b) Such phrases as

	
<i>kib - rat</i>	<i>arba'-i</i>
the four regions	
	
<i>kib - rat</i>	<i>irbittim (tim)</i>

(c)			(var.)	
	<i>iš - tin</i>	<i>eš-rit</i>	(var.)	<i>eš - tin</i>
	Eleven.			


<i>eš - ri - tum</i>

<sup>1</sup> W. A. I., IV, 4, IV, 28.

<sup>2</sup> W. A. I., I, 9, 37.

<sup>3</sup> G. Smith, *Hist. of Sennach.*, p. 5, l. 2. This is one of the cases quoted by Scheil and Fossey (*Grammaire*, p. 10) "where it is manifestly impossible to suppose a construct state."

<sup>4</sup> King, *Cun. Texts*, xiii., 2, r. 11, and 7, 36.

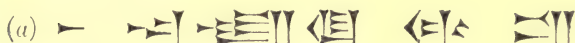


(d) 

*A - ra - aḫ sa - am - na*

Marcheswan.

(5) “*Après la négation. . .*”

(a) 

*ina*

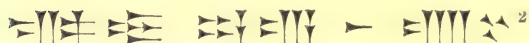
*ba - li - ki*

*ul*

*iṣ -*

Without thee

will not be



*ṣak - kan*

*nap - tun*

*ina*

*é - kur*

set

a meal-time

in

the temple.

(b) 

*ina*

*hu - ḫa - ri*

*ša*

*e - ri - e*

With

a trap

of

bronze



*sa - ḫi - ip*

*ul*

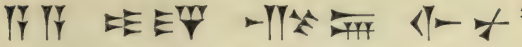
*i - di*

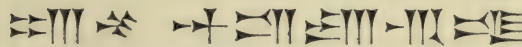
an overthrower he does not know.


<sup>1</sup> Brünnow, *List*, No. 1030.

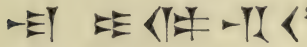
<sup>2</sup> Tallqvist, *Maqlu*, vi., 95.


<sup>3</sup> Brünnow, *Zeits. für Assyriol.*, iv., p. 27, l. 22; Gray, *Amer. Journ. Sem. Lang.*, xvii., 3, p. 138-139, l. 38.

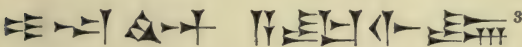
- (c)  <sup>1</sup>  
*a - a*      *i - bur*      *zi - ir*      *lim - nu*  
 Let not      an evil seed      carry away.

- (d)   
*um - mu*      <sup>ilu</sup> *Iṣ - ta - ri - tum*  
 Mother      Ishtar      (unto)

-   
*ša*      *id - da - a - ša*      *il*      *man-ma*  
 whose      side      no      god

-   
*la*      *i - ti - lu - u*  
 approacheth.






- (e)   
*ša*      *iṣ - sur*      *mu - par - šu*      *la*  
 Whose seat      no flying bird

-   
*i - ba - '*      *a - šar - ši - in* <sup>3</sup>  
 sought.









<sup>1</sup> Martin, *Textes Religieux*, p. 90, K, 255, rev. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Haupt, *Akkad. u. Sumer. Keils.*, p. 116, No. 15, obv. 12.

<sup>3</sup> W. A. I., I, 30, I, 48-49.

(f)      <sup>1</sup>  
*mal-kut la ša - na - an*  
 A kingdom unrivalled.






The following is a doubtful case :

(g)       <sup>2</sup>  
*mi - lik la ku(?) - šir(?) im -*  
 An unlucky counsel they  
  <sup>3</sup>  
*li - ku*  
 took.

Case (c) shows that if we regard *zir* as an absolute and not as a noun in construction with *limnu* (for *limni* or *limnuti*), that the adjective may retain the case-endings. Cf. case (e).

(6) “Après *kul*” (“*all*”).

(a)     <sup>4</sup>  
*gi - mir ma - lik*  
 All kings.

but, on the other hand, Delitzsch<sup>5</sup> explains this as “quite anomalous,” and such phrases as     

<sup>1</sup> W. A. I., I, 35, I, 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> So Jensen (*Keils. Bibl.*, 2, 164), but Delitzsch (*Handw.*, p. 412, a) KU.UZU.

<sup>3</sup> W. A. I., V, I, 121.

<sup>4</sup> W. A. I., V, 62, No. 1, 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Grammar*, § 126.

*kal ma-al-ki*<sup>1</sup> can be urged against it. *Kal* is, however, usually considered to be a noun in the construct governing a genitive.

(7) "*Quelques substantifs seulement ne sont usités qu'à l'état absolu.*"

Under this heading may be classed several words which frequently occur without case-endings.

(a) Certain names of divinities and rivers.<sup>2</sup>

(b) *Tiamat*, used for "sea," e.g.

𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵<sup>3</sup>  
*ša šid - di Ti - amat*  
 which is a region of the sea.

(c) *markas* :

𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵<sup>4</sup>  
*pa - ri - is purussa iršitim (tim)*  
 who fixeth the laws of the earth,

𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵<sup>4</sup>  
*mar-kas rabu (u) ša iḫ*  
 the great bond of

𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎵<sup>4</sup>  
 DURU . NA  
 Duruna.


<sup>1</sup> W. A. L., I, 37, I, 7.


<sup>2</sup> See Scheil and Fossey, *Grammaire*, p. 53, 54; Delitzsch, *Grammar*, § 66.

<sup>3</sup> Harper, *Assyrian Letters*, No. 381, obv. 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Martin, *Textes Religieux*, p. 74, K. 48, 3.

(d) *mamit*


  
*ina ni - ši u ma-mit*  
 With oath and ban


  
*tu - kat - ta - in - ni*  
 ye overwhelm me.

  
*ni - iŝ kata<sup>II</sup> ma-mit*  
 The raising of the hands in oath.

Under this head also will come such words as *ašar* "where," *zamar*, and perhaps *lam* "before," and *mamman*.

(8) To the above must be added such parts of personal names as have dropped no case-endings,<sup>3</sup> e.g.

  
<sup>m</sup> *Mu - šik - niš*

  
<sup>m ilu</sup> *Rammanu - mu - šam - mir, &c.*

<sup>1</sup> Tallqvist, *Maqlu*, v., 72.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vii., 130.<sup>3</sup> Delitzsch, *Grammar*, § 66.<sup>4</sup> W. A. I., III, 1, III, 3.<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* III, 28: or ought this latter to come under the head of predicates?



(9) In addition to those of the preceding eight clauses several cases occur which, though not corresponding to any definite Syriac rule, are obviously connected with the fundamental idea of the absolute.

(a) Indefinite vocatives drop the case-endings :

𐎶 𐎠 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶	𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶
<i>a - mat - su - nu</i>	<i>u - ša - an - na - a</i>
Their word	he repeated

𐎶	𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶	𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶𐎶𐎶
<i>ana</i>	<i>ki - ik - ki - šu :</i>	<i>ki - ik - kiš</i>
unto	the reed-hut :	Reed-hut,

𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶	𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶	𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶 <sup>1</sup>
<i>ki - ik - kiš</i>	<i>i - gar</i>	<i>i - gar</i>
Reed-hut !	Wall,	Wall !

This case of dropped termination is the more marked here by reason of the appearance of *kikkišu* with the full termination both in this and the next line. *Igaru* also occurs in the next line :

𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶	𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶
<i>ki - ik - ki - šu</i>	<i>ši - me - ma</i>
Reed - hut,	hearken !

𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶	𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶 𐎶𐎶𐎶
<i>i - ga - ru</i>	<i>hi - is - sa - as</i>
(and) wall,	give heed !

<sup>1</sup> W.A.I., IV, 43 [50], I, 20.

Presumably here the vocative is made more definite by the addition of an imperative depending on it.

Again, in the curious text W. A. I., IV, 60\*, are we justified in translating *l. 2*,

<i>a - sah</i>	<i>- har</i>	<i>- ma</i>	<i>li - mun</i>	
I turned myself		and	O Evil!	

<i>li - mun</i>	<i>- ma</i>
Evil! (cried)	

taking *limun* as a vocative? <sup>1</sup>

The following examples are instructive :

(b)					
<i>ilu</i>	NIN . KAR . RA . AG			<i>be - lit</i>	
Ninkarrag,				lady	


<i>rik</i>	<i>- si</i>	<i>up</i>	<i>- ša</i>	<i>- še</i>	<i>- e</i>
of charm		(and)	incantation,		

<i>e</i>	<i>- pi</i>	<i>- sat</i>	<i>nik</i>	<i>- ka</i>	<i>- si</i>
inventress of commerce					

<sup>1</sup> *Limun* is usually explained as the permansive of *lamānu*, Delitzsch, *Handw.*, p. 380b, Scheil and Fossey, *Grammaire*, p. 43. But as the simplest form of the adjective *limnu*, it might also be considered an absolute.



(a)  <sup>1</sup>

*ta - mit          it - mu - u*

They utter an incantation.

(b) 

*mi - hir*

*tu - sum - hir -*

(Whatever) ill-luck thou lettest



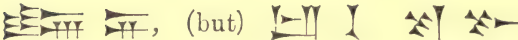
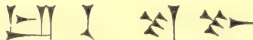
*in - ni,*

*gi - mil*

*tag - mil -*

befall me,

(whatever) requital thou

 (but) 

*in - ni*

*ip - su*

*te - pu -*

requitest me with,

(whatever) deed

 <sup>2</sup>

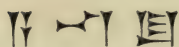

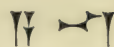
*sin - ni*


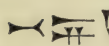


thou doest to me.

Compare also page 19, (4) (a), and page 22, (5) (g).

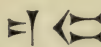

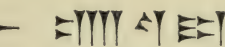
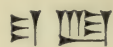
<sup>1</sup> Martin, *Textes Religieux*, p. 104, l. 20.



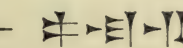


<sup>2</sup> Quoted from Tallqvist, *Maqlu*, vii., 69-71.

		
<i>a - na - ku</i>	<i>hi - it</i>	<i>a - na</i>
I	a sin	against

			
<i>šarri</i>	<i>be-ili-ia</i>	<i>ul</i>	<i>ah - ti</i> <sup>1</sup>
the king, my lord,		have not committed.	

(e) Is the following a kind of *collective* use?

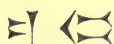
			
<i>iš - šur</i>	<i>ina</i>	<i>E - babbar - ra</i>	<i>ma - tu -</i>
There are (only a) few birds in E-babbara			

				
<i>u</i>	<i>ina</i>	<i>pa - la - hu</i>	<i>ša</i>	<i>ilâni</i> <sup>1</sup>
for the worship of the gods :				

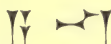
<sup>1</sup> W. A. I., IV, 46, 9: but on the other hand compare the late Babylonian letter, B.M. No. 49181, rev. 1-2 :

				
<i>hi - tu</i>	<i>a - na</i>	<i>bel - ia</i>	<i>ul</i>	<i>ah - tu.</i>

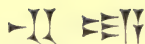



*iš - sur*

birds


*a - na*

unto


*bel - ia*

my lord


*aš - pur - ru*

I will send.

But in all these cases considerable laxity prevails. Just as in Syriac in many cases the use of the emphatic is as common as that of the absolute,<sup>2</sup> so in Assyrian the noun need not of necessity adhere to any fixed law, as will be seen at once by comparing variants. All that can be said is that the fundamental idea of indefiniteness appears to underlie the cases in Assyrian where the noun (not in the construct) drops its case terminations. As soon as it is required to make the noun definite, it at once assumes the case endings; *e.g.* in the case of a predicate, *da-a-a-nu ši-ru ša same(e) u iršitim(tim) at-ta*,<sup>3</sup> or even *man-nu ši-i-ru* <sup>4</sup>; or after a negative, *e-du ul e-zib*.<sup>5</sup> We may regard it as certain,

<sup>1</sup> Late Babylonian letter, B.M. No. 60105, 5 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Duval, *Grammaire*, p. 337 (f).

<sup>3</sup> W. A. I., IV, 28, I, 20a.

<sup>4</sup> W. A. I., IV, 9, 54.

<sup>5</sup> W. A. I., I., 37, 57.

even from the comparatively few cases which occur, that the dropped case-ending was in most cases, at least, intentional and not accidental, and further, since this phenomenon takes place in prose as well as in poetry, it was in no wise due to a regard for metre.

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Thompson, R. Campbell

On traces of an indefinite article in  
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